

Customer Satisfaction Report

YOU, THE CUSTOMERS of the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), have spoken to us in many ways this past year, providing valuable guidance for positive change. The suggestions for improvements have come from two sources: The comments that we have received from you this past year and the input from our major data users at the March 1995 conference on BEA's Mid-Decade Strategic Plan. In response, we have made many improvements in the quality and the accessibility of our products and services. This report is a summary of what you told us and what we have done.

Your comments have arrived via telephone calls, letters, and the Internet. When we reviewed this input and combined it with our in-depth analysis of your comments on the 1995 Customer Satisfaction Survey conducted for us by the Bureau of the Census, two messages clearly emerged. You wanted enhancements to the Regional Economic Information System (REIS) CD-ROM, and you wanted us to provide more of our information electronically. We listened.

Many of you told us that the REIS CD-ROM is invaluable, but you suggested ways to make it easier to use. We made the following changes:

- Installed new Windows-based retrieval software that can be used to display, print, and copy tables.
- Created easy-to-use help menus and an index to guide you through the data retrieval process.
- Ensured that the regional projections, gross state product, and quarterly State personal income estimates can now be viewed directly through the retrieval software.
- Added documentation that guides the user step-by-step through the data and that describes each data table.
- Created an e-mail address where your questions are quickly answered by regional statistical experts and where you can exchange information electronically.

- Expanded the REIS training program to demonstrate the new features of the CD-ROM.

You have flooded us with requests for increased electronic availability of our data and analyses. We responded quickly with the following:

- Doubled the number of data files available by subscription on the STAT-USA Internet site to include more detailed national accounts estimates and a new regional data section (<http://www.stat-usa.gov>).
- Expanded the information available for free on BEA's Web site to include more summaries of our recently released estimates and selected articles from the SURVEY OF CURRENT BUSINESS.
- Joined in the establishment of the free Economic Statistics Briefing Room at the White House Web site, where you can now find, at a single location, the current "headlines" of the best known economic statistics from BEA, the Census Bureau, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Federal Reserve System, and other Federal statistical agencies (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/fsbr/esbr.html>).

Our second source of input was the suggestions that we received from the participants at the users' conference on a draft of our Mid-Decade Strategic Plan for improving and modernizing the national, regional, and international economic accounts. The final Plan reflects this input. To date, we have accomplished the following:

- Introduced improved chain-type measures of real gross domestic product and prices.
- Incorporated quality-adjusted prices of exports and imports of semiconductors.
- Introduced the treatment of government purchases of structures and equipment as investment to provide a more complete and consistent picture of the Nation's investment and saving.

BEA's Customer Service Standards

1. BEA staff will respond to customer correspondence within 5 business days.
2. BEA staff will return customer phone calls within 1 business day.
3. BEA will ship off-the-shelf products within 3 business days.
4. BEA will meet its published annual calendar of news release dates. Any changes in these dates will be announced as far in advance as possible.
5. BEA will provide access to news releases on the Internet, the Economic Bulletin Board, STAT-USA FAX, and recorded telephone messages at the time of release.

- Introduced a new method for calculating depreciation in the measures of investment and saving in the national accounts.
- Conducted the first survey of international trade in financial services.
- Redesigned our surveys of U.S. direct investment abroad to collect additional data on the increasing international trade in services, by type, of U.S. multinational companies.

Next year, we will gather information on customer satisfaction from our electronic data users on the Internet. Because of the nature of our service—providing data—and because of the marked preference of our customers to do business electronically, the

Internet is an ideal forum for interaction with our customers.

We at BEA would like to thank you for your comments. You are helping us to improve our products and services.

Keep talking to us. We want to hear from you. Please write, fax, call, or e-mail your comments to us.

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